

JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Message from the Director Donald Nicholls



Gaston Cooper

Wachiya. In 2015-2016, the Department of Justice and Correctional Services has seen growth in our staff, programs, services and facilities. As always, we are thankful for the dedication of our staff in the performance of their duties, and to the relationships and partnerships we have developed at the community, regional, provincial and federal levels. Our abilities to deliver new services start with an investment in our own people, and in creating processes and linkages to other community oriented resources.

We believe that solutions can be found by creating stronger connections, understandings and relationships through engagements with more people locally, by establishing community dialogues, and by enhancing overall skills development in our organizations. To this end, we continue to provide key training in areas of conflict resolution, mediation, and understanding the underlying human identity needs of those we work with.

This year, we welcome eight new employees to the Department, in order to help us expand the type of services we offer. In turn, this expansion will ultimately help to fulfill our mission in offering better community-based services, more accessibility to justice and corrections systems, and to reinforce Cree values, ways, and philosophies into the programs, services, and systems we work with. A Cree system needs to honour and respect our ways, while balancing the federal and provincial systems of justice and corrections. These new positions are community based, and are spread throughout the Cree Nation.

We also invested in our facilities by adding to our conference rooms a series of photographs wrapping around the rooms that represent local values, activities, and significant landmarks. There was also the integration of more Cree signage throughout each facility in local dialects. Another key investment in each facility was the installation of state-of-the-art video conferencing and

media systems. The system creates an internal network with all nine communities, allowing opportunities for meetings, trainings, hearings and presentations. Externally, it can securely link to courts, corrections facilities, and other organizations in the South, to enhance timeliness and accessibility of justice, and to reduce hardships and costs associated with travel for appearances. At present, we host over 100 such hearings per year. Finally, this year, we started construction on the two regional women's shelters in collaboration with the CBHSSJB.

This past year marked important events for Aboriginal Peoples, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, which was deposited in December after seven years of work. We know many Cree participated in the events that the TRC hosted, including the final session in Winnipeg and the delivery of the report in Ottawa. It has been a long journey, but we sense there is recognition of the damages done and a commitment from government to act. It is historic but the work is not done. It is important that every Canadian now knows the truth, so that we can move forward to develop the plan to implement change and educate all people in Canada on residential schools and the history of Aboriginal Peoples. The TRC produced 94 Calls to Action for governments and organizations to implement to ensure the work done effects change in Canada. The Department is open to working with other Cree departments, entities and the communities on these Calls to Action.

Another important milestone followed the election of the new federal government. We congratulate the Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, who is a member of the We Wai Kai First Nation. She became Minister of Justice, and is the first Indigenous person to be named to that post.

We also recognise the courage of the Aboriginal women who spoke up in October 2015 about their experiences with provincial police officers in Val d'Or. Their intervention educated people all over Quebec about the northern reality of First Nations. We know this is not an isolated incident, and it clearly highlighted the value of and need for more services for vulnerable populations. The Cree Nation Government was instrumental in bringing appropriate attention to the issue by directly engaging with other Governments to work against racism, and to develop safer communities and environments for Aboriginal Peoples. The safety of our people was essential to any solution, as was the need for investigative processes to be open and inclusive. The municipality of Val d'Or took steps to be recognized as a part of UNESCO's Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism, and the province committed to providing more funding and

CONTINUOUSLY RAISING EXPERTISE IN THE DEPARTMENT AND COMMUNITIES

We invest time and resources in developing our personnel, as it is a department priority. We aim at building efficiency and expertise in areas of justice and corrections, inclusive of Cree values, usages and knowledge. We therefore have continued to offer customized Cree training curriculum focused on a foundation of essential skills development and also based on the role occupied within the Department or the Community Justice Committees.

Training Curriculum

To our staff, we regularly give training in mediation and conciliation skills, facilitation, community dialogue and other forms of client intervention as we aim at having services available locally to resolve interpersonal conflicts, employee disputes and group-based issues. Last year, our staff received a halfway houses workshop, and they were also trained to ensure a positive transition of released inmates within the community, as one of their roles is to help and support reintegration in Cree society.

The Community Justice Committees, which are independent bodies composed of volunteers present in all nine communities, are pivotal in the delivery of a local justice system that integrates and respects Cree values and ways. Through their interventions, they make justice services readily accessible and their skill set therefore needs to be continuously evolving to improve their overall effectiveness and ability to support their peers.

Last year, Community Justice Committees have had a number of training sessions, sponsored through an agreement with the Department of Justice Canada. In 2015-2016, for example, they were taught how to deal with domestic violence files, as this is an area of priority in the Cree communities. They also attended CICR training, participated in strategic planning for 2016-2017, and were introduced by Youth Protection to a proposed new system of dealing with youth files locally.

CICR and Conflict Resolution Coaching

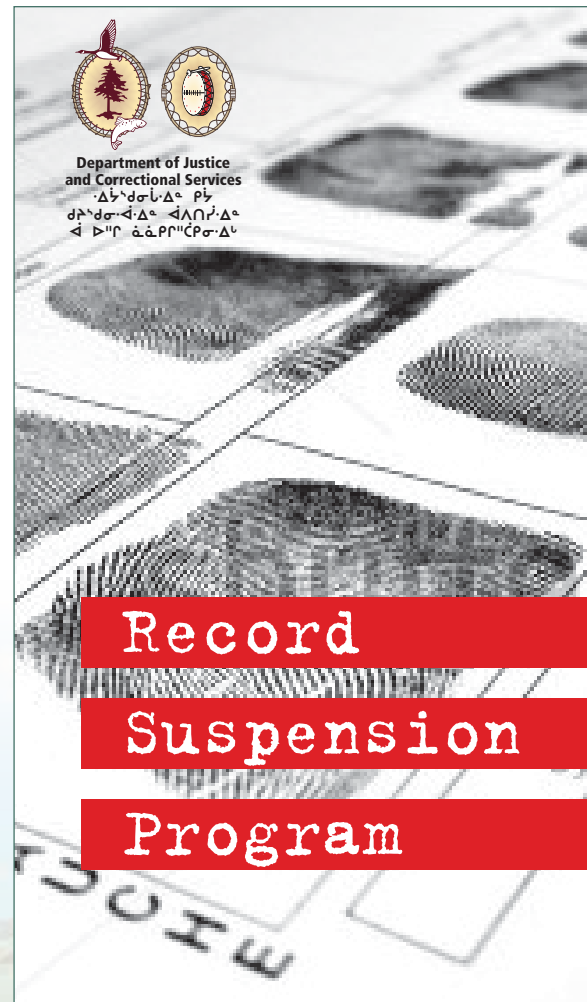
For the last five years, we have trained and certified the majority of our staff in the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution (CICR) training program as it is our belief that not all conflicts need to go through the legal systems. 2015-2016 saw the fifth class of graduates. Members of the Community Justice Committees were included in the training to better prepare them, as the training is a good foundation to understanding the underlying needs with people they will work with locally. A valued contribution to the training this year was the increased participation of Cree Elders, who worked with staff to discuss how to best approach meditation techniques with traditional ways. We were also pleased to offer the training to a member of the Cree Women's Association of Eeyou Istchee, an organization we work closely with on the women's shelters and the domestic violence file.

Each year, the delivery of the program becomes more fluid. The CNG owns the Cree version of the CICR Program, as the content from the beginning is being adapted to the Cree realities and values. We have also been working closely with the Institute to train Cree trainers. To date, we have had three staff in the role as co-trainers of the program, and we are committed to train our staff so we can continue to offer this transformative training for years to come in the Cree Nation.

In 2015-2016, as a part of the project to establish conflict resolution services in the communities, the Department engaged CTCP and Cinergy Coaching to provide a group comprised of staff and Community Justice Committee members a regime of advanced training and practical experience in order to build conflict resolution competency and self-confidence. The first cohort was certified and was offered a second advanced training. We plan on continuing to offer this type of one-on-one coaching as it proved of value, and was in line with Cree values.

Record Suspension training

The Corrections staff participated in a training session on the Record Suspension Program. As the former federal government had changed some of the rules related to



pardons and record suspensions, we updated our training to reflect this and to better equip our staff. This program allows our employees to work with those who are eligible for getting their criminal record suspended. Eligibility is determined by the type of offence and how long it has been since a client has satisfied all the conditions of their sentence. This opens up potential employment opportunities in the communities and territory. In each community, the Community Reintegration Officer can guide people through the process.

MAKING JUSTICE READILY AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE

Since the beginning, the Department has strived at making justice relevant in the daily life of the community. One avenue to do so is by making tools that explain simply what we do and educate on the justice system, build infrastructure that reflect Cree values and ways of life and offer the most appropriate services to meet the needs of the Eeyou Istchee clientele.

Glossary of legal terms in Eeyou Eenou language: the presence of the Cree language

The CNG and DOJCS have a vision of more judicial autonomy, eventually having more Cree lawyers serving Cree clients, in Cree courts. The Department has started, in collaboration with the Cree communities, an exercise to highlight provisions and rules that need to be included or adjusted for courts operating within the Cree communi-

ties. As well, the JBNQA stipulates, among other things, that, in the judicial district of Abitibi, in all civil, criminal, penal, and all statutory matters where a Cree person is a party to the proceedings, or is the accused, interpreters must be provided as a right without costs to such Cree party. The Department decided four years ago to develop a glossary of legal terms in the Eeyou Eenou language to improve the delivery of clear and correct Cree translations in any such proceedings and such processes, while increasing the baseline understanding when people come into contact with the courts, corrections and rehabilitation programs. This glossary is expected to truly make a difference in court as well as in other justice and corrections related work.

Until her early passing, Gerti Murdoch coordinated the Cree Justice Terminology Project working group that includes four language specialists – to account for Whapmagoostui, Northern Coastal, Southern Coastal and Inland dialects of Cree – and a legal advisor working on the French and English translations.

The *Glossary of legal terms in Eeyou Eenou language*, which will be available shortly, will be a guide of key words, including a definition and an image, available to all translators, workers and clients in the Cree justice and corrections systems and rehabilitation programs. It will define words, concepts and processes into 3 Cree dialects, as well as French and English. In its final form, the document will be available in print, and there will be an electronic form of the glossary that can be reviewed and updated as laws, processes and definitions may change over time.



The website of the Department of Justice and Correctional Services was fully redesigned and updated to better inform the Crees of Eeyou Istchee of the services available.

The *Glossary of legal terms in Eeyou Eenou language* will become an important part of fair justice proceedings, corrections processes, and youth protection cases.

Legal Information Training/Workshops

We offered to our Department's staff, including receptionists, justice coordinators, and CAVAC officers, a 4-day training session to clarify the difference between providing legal information and providing legal advice, and to prepare them to answer questions regarding how the legal system and the mediation process work. We had attended a tribal court conference where Native justice personnel were being trained on providing assistance and information to the general public without giving legal advice, as this can only be offered in Quebec by members of the Quebec Bar.

This training was offered to our staff to create even more fluency in the matters of justice. It provided them with all necessary information about the legal system and related issues of importance, while adapting the teachings to take into account how it would be relevant to the Crees of Eeyou Istchee. A second session will soon be offered to staff in order to develop a broader base of expertise. This will allow the Department to offer our clientele the best information possible about the functioning of the justice system, to make justice more accessible.

The Department is also looking to present legal information workshops throughout the nine communities as a means of mass education to raise awareness and empower community members to utilise the services. One of the Department's objectives is to ensure the general public in Eeyou Istchee develops an overall comprehension of the justice system and has the best possible access to information and legal services. This is consistent with the JBNQA, which contemplates the establishment of information programs to help Cree citizens understand the law.

Website

In 2015, the website of the Department of Justice and Correctional Services was fully redesigned and updated to better inform the Crees of Eeyou Istchee of the services available. The website allows people to easily access information related to the legal and corrections systems, and to have the CNG DOJCS at their fingertips. The platform can also work on mobile technology, including phones and tablets. The final version of the website, which will come online shortly, will be in English, Cree and French. The circle design, which appears predominantly on our new website, reflects the Cree value of inclusiveness and a sense of community – it is also reflective of our round courtrooms.

Each section of the new website is dedicated to information that is central to the administration of justice, and the mandate of the Department to inform the Cree public. Even more interactive and user friendly than the previous version, it will also serve as a solid resource for communities.



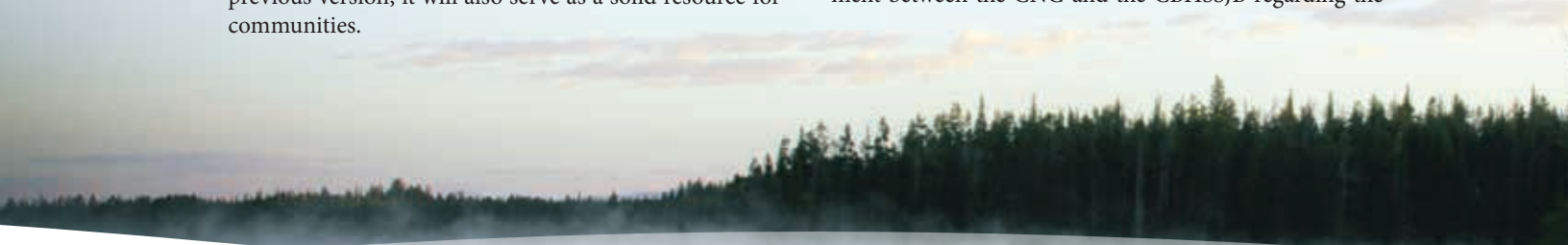
Educational comic strips

Comic strips are another means chosen to share messages and educate people. The latest addition, available in all nine communities at the justice facility, is built around a simple and realistic story, depicting Cree culture in Cree settings. It gives a concrete example about how Community Justice Committees, through mediation, can help resolve issues locally. The booklet has an educational purpose and explains something about how justice should be successfully administered while in line with Cree values and ways. It is offered in Cree and English versions, and has an electronic form as well. There are a series of others in development as a part of the Funds projects.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES: A ROOTED PRESENCE

Women's shelters

Building Women's shelters and offering the related services remain a priority for the Cree Nation Government (CNG). This year, the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSSQ) approved the 20-year lease agreement between the CNG and the CBHSSJB regarding the





Building the Women Shelter in Waswanipi

operation of women's shelters to be built in Eeyou Istchee. Following the competition held for the site selection, Waswanipi and Waskaganish were chosen to build the two 18-bed facilities for Cree women and their children.

While the Waswanipi Shelter construction started last Fall, Waskaganish was put on hold as there were concerns with the selected site's stability. At the recommendation by the Judicial Advisory Committee, the CNG decided to postpone its construction to the late Spring of 2016 in

order to better plan for the lot's stability and reduce overall costs of winter construction, given more funds would be needed to secure the building on the selected site. We anticipate the Waswanipi shelter will be completed in November 2016, and the Waskaganish shelter in early 2017.

In parallel, a Working Group of experts, including representatives from the Cree Nation Government and its Department of Justice and Correctional Services, the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association, and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, has been working on developing the programs best suited to the needs of our Cree women and children. The Department of Justice and Correctional Services is providing a shelter's expert to assist the Working Group to develop needed policies, procedures, and programs.

Opening of Justice facility in Nemaska

The Department of Justice and Correctional Services maintains a number of facilities to ensure the efficient administration of justice in the Cree Nation. These state of the art buildings themselves include strong symbolism. Of the nine centers built, not all have been officially inaugurated. A few years ago, the inauguration of Nemaska was planned but due to weather conditions we could not open it. So, it was a special day to return to be able to present the facility to the people of the Cree Nation of Nemaska.

Following an invitation from Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come, the Quebec Minister of Justice Stéphanie Vallée, along with the Quebec Minister of Aboriginal Affairs Geoffrey Kelley, Chief Thomas Jolly, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister responsible for Native Affairs Jean Boucher, members of the community, members of the Judiciary, and other distinguished guests, officially



From left to right: Donald Nicholls, Director of the Department of Justice, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister responsible for Native Affairs, Jean Boucher, Québec Minister of Justice, Stéphanie Vallée, Nemaska Chief, Thomas Jolly, Québec Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Geoffrey Kelley, and Deputy Grand Chief Rodney Mark

opened the already-in-use eighth justice facility in Nemaska. This event was an occasion for all parties to note the tremendous work and efforts that the Community Justice Committee and Department invest in making Cree justice a success. Minister Vallée commented on the importance of making justice accessible to all. The inauguration of the last facility in Eastmain, also in use, will take place in the near future.

These buildings are a true symbol of our strong relationship with the communities, which is a cornerstone of the way justice is rendered in harmony with Cree values and culture.

CAVAC: a third location approved to support Victims and Witnesses of Crime

The mission of CAVAC (Crime Victims Assistance Centers) Officers is to address the needs and concerns of victims and witnesses of crime in Quebec. Until the Quebec Government launched the CAVAC program in 1988, victims and witnesses of crime were not receiving support within the justice system.

Over the past year, a number of new files were opened to provide support, information and liaison with other services for Cree victims and witnesses of criminal acts. In addition to the two CAVAC offices currently located within two Cree communities, a third location was approved by the Quebec government to provide increased and additional support services in Eeyou Istchee. A third employee will be hired shortly to fill the new CAVAC officer position. Centrally located in James Bay territory, the CAVAC officer will work with Eastmain, Waskaganish, and Nemaska. As per the past, CAVAC officers travelled to the other communities with the courts, and when requested by clients.

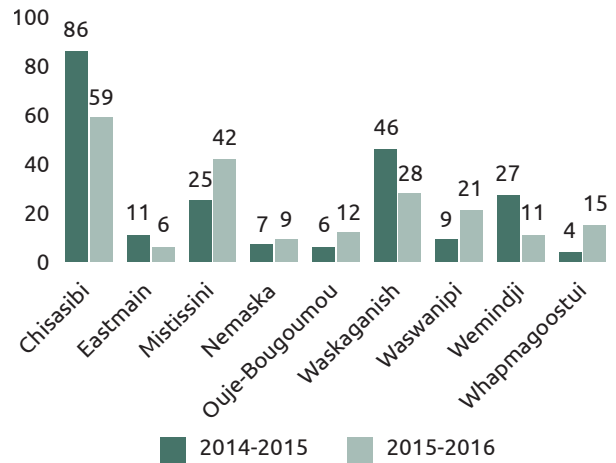
The Val-d'Or incidents, involving vulnerable Native women and police officers, clearly demonstrated the importance of the CAVAC's role and emphasized how the Department's work was pivotal in supporting the victims of criminal acts. In response to the situation, more training on grieving, human trafficking, and victims of crime was offered to our staff, and information and tools were given in communities.

In light of the events, and of the boycott that followed, the Cree leadership worked with Val-d'Or and the Quebec Government to develop the "Val-d'Or Declaration", which is an agreement sealing the reconciliation and lasting and equitable collaboration between our communities and members, while working at improving relations. Grand Chief Mathew Coon Come and the Mayor of Val-d'Or, Pierre Corbeil, along with Chief David Kistabish, Chief Adrienne Anichinapéo, and Chief Salomee McKenzie agreed that more means need to be implemented to promote coexistence, in an environment free of violence, racism and discrimination.

The Val-d'Or Declaration followed two motions from city council of Val-d'Or. The first approved joining the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism

and Discrimination. The second supported demands by First Nations leaders that Quebec create a provincial inquiry into discrimination and abuse of Indigenous women by public security forces.

CAVAC - Support to Cree victims and witnesses of crime (by Community)



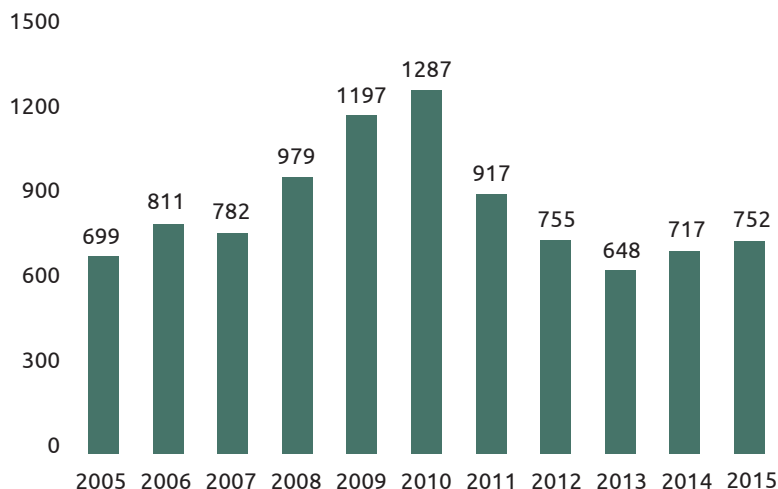
COURTS AND COMMUNITY JUSTICE

Court Statistics

The justice facilities, built and operated by the Cree Nation Government, host the itinerant court traveling to the Cree communities. In all Cree communities, the itinerant court hears cases of the Court of Quebec including its Criminal and Penal Division, Civil Division, Youth Division and Small Claims Division. In addition, the Superior Court of Quebec may also hear cases in civil, family, and criminal matters in all Cree communities.

The court calendar for the 2015-2016 year was a busy one. Every year, we work at increasing the activities taking place locally to allow justice to be more accessible. This year saw many dates for criminal court, youth courts, by-laws and civil trials. These facilities help the court take into consideration the type of support clients may have locally or regionally, and they also allow for people who wish to have a voice in the process to be present. Community Justice Committees and other services can therefore participate in possible solutions.

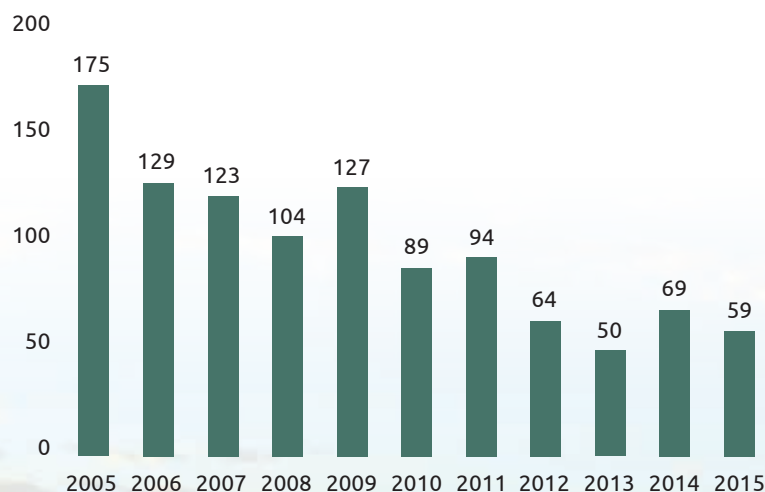
Evolution of the Number of Criminal Offence Cases



Criminal Offences include offences under the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, such as:

- Assault (including domestic violence)
- Driving while impaired
- Breach of conditions (probation, release)
- Threat

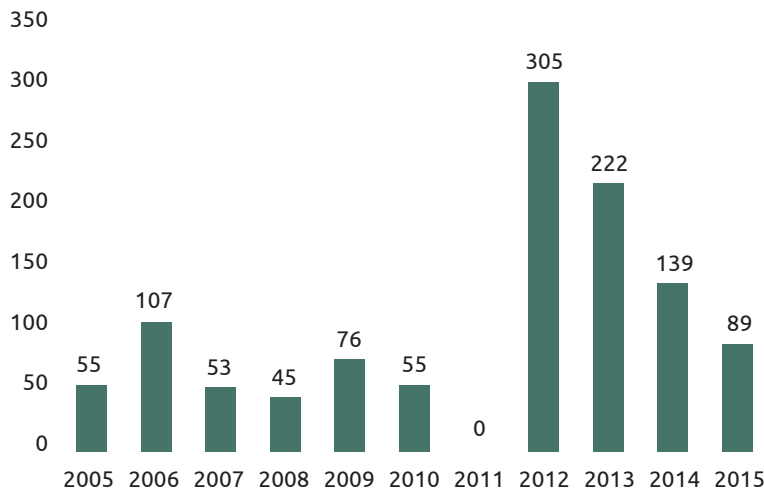
Evolution of the Number of Young Offenders Cases



Young Offenders offences include legal proceedings instituted under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA). The YCJA governs Canada's youth justice system.

- Applies to youth between 12-18 years old who are alleged to have committed criminal offences under the Criminal Code

Evolution of the Number of Statutory Offence Cases (Federal)

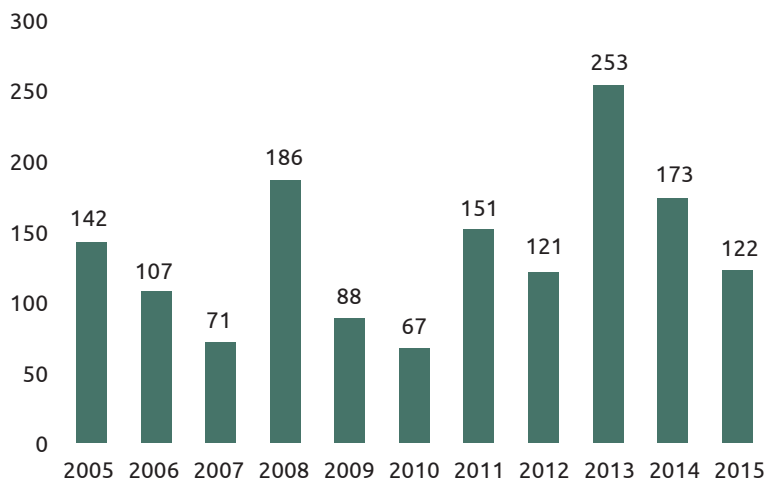


Statutory Offences (Federal) include the files opened for offences under federal statutory laws, other than Criminal Code, such as:

- Fisheries Act (federal aspects, e.g. method of fishing)

Offences mostly committed by non-Cree

Evolution of the Number of Statutory Offence Cases (Provincial)

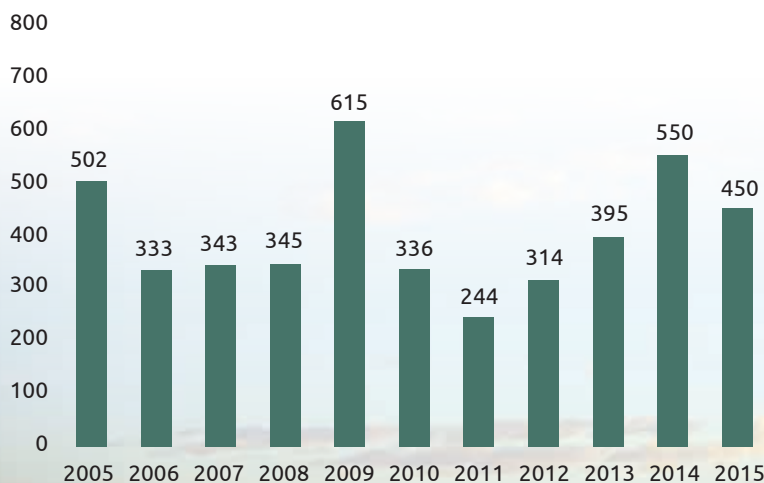


Statutory Offences (Québec) include files opened for offences under Québec statutory laws and regulations, such as:

- Highway Safety Code
- Laws and regulations regarding fishing (provincial aspects, e.g. fishing license, period, catch) Also includes offences under Regional Municipal by-laws
- By-law No. 148 concerning Safety, Peace and Order (e.g., use of firearms across or towards a road)
- Bylaw No. 149 concerning Nuisances (e.g., eviscerating and leaving animal carcasses on the road or on a snowmobile trail)

Offences mostly committed by non-Cree

Evolution of the Number of Community By-Law Offence Cases



Community By-Law Offences include files opened for offences such as:

- Nuisance
- Highway Safety Code
- Alcohol By-Laws
- Curfew



There were close to 120 videoconference hearings in total in the nine justice facilities in the past year. Allowing for a trial or testimony to be done locally reduces overall costs to partners, families, and clients. The number of days are coordinated through the Justice Administrator, and determined by an assessment of needs.

Videoconferencing technology was an important investment for the DOJCS, both in terms of budget and time. All 9 communities were equipped with state of the art equipment allowing for much flexibility. We have also been testing videoconference for interviews and for educational purposes, keeping in mind that we wish to maximise the use of our resources and are always cost conscious.

Rules of Practice for Itinerant Court (Court of Quebec)

The Court of Quebec approached the Cree Nation Government for consultation on new rules of practice that would apply specifically to the itinerant court, including when travelling to the Cree communities. The JBNQA provides that the courts may establish, from time to time, rules of practice required for the proper administration of justice in the Cree communities, but only after having consulted with the Cree Nation Government.

The Cree Nation Government welcomed this initiative, which provides a new opportunity for a constructive dialogue between the Cree Nation and the Court of Quebec in order to ensure better access to justice for the Crees.

The Cree Nation Government and the Court of Quebec agreed to a special consultation process in regard to the proposed new rules of practice that reflects provisions of our JBNQA Treaty, as well as specificity of our region and our Cree Nation within Quebec. This process is expected to take into account the particular circumstances of the Crees, as required by paragraph 18,0,15 of the JBNQA. It would also serve to ensure that the perspectives of those in the Cree Nation and in our communities, who are most involved with the operation of the Court of Quebec, are properly considered. The Cree Nation Government intends to work closely with the Court of Quebec to make

these consultations both meaningful and efficient. These consultations have already started and all communities and relevant Cree stakeholders will be able to convey their concerns and ideas in order to improve on the current rules.

Gladue reports

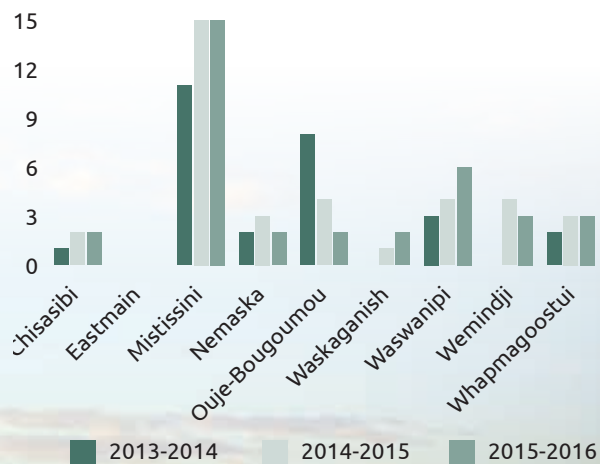
Gladue reporting follows Criminal Code amendments and a subsequent Supreme Court of Canada decision in 1999 requiring sentencing judges to look at the social, cultural, and historical background of an Aboriginal offender before handing down a sentence. With recognition of the over representation of Aboriginal peoples in the federal and provincial correctional systems, the intention is to provide the sentencing judges more information in order to be better equipped to determine an appropriate sentence for an offender.

The production of a Gladue report requires the input from many different sources to look at what is best for the offender while respecting what is in the best interest of the public. In 2015-2016, the Quebec Government has made changes to the Gladue process in general. Requests can now only come from courts and no longer from individuals.

In some cases, the government has offered remuneration to specialists involved in the production of such reports. A number of Department staff and Justice Committee members have completed training and can produce Gladue reports when requested. It is a time consuming exercise given the amount of work that goes into each report. Since Justice Committee members are volunteers that have been trained to write such extensive reports, the DOJCS is in discussions with the Government of Quebec to recognize their valued contributions as well. The Department receives compliments on the quality of Gladue reports submitted.

Throughout the year, the Department produced 35 Gladue Reports for members with offences facing possible time in detention. In addition, 18 more people were trained to increase the number of justice personnel qualified to produce these reports.

Gladue Report Produced



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Hiring within the Communities

The DOJCS makes efforts to hire locally – our staff members are part of their community and have strong ties. They possess the utmost understanding of the context and nuances. In the accomplishment of their work, they are in a position to take into account the challenges faced. This type of knowledge allows us to offer the services best adapted. Our local staff have access to precise statistics and trends concerning various types of offences that guide us in the development and offer of services.

Furthermore, the Community Justice Committee exists to improve judicial outcomes and safety for all people in the community. It assists in the administration of justice at the local level, by helping youth and adult offenders take responsibility for their actions and repair harm, and by preventing crime and victimization. A Community Justice Committee member manages files so that certain cases can be diverted by the Crown Attorney to the local committee rather than going through the court system.

In 2015-2016, the Department started to develop a project with a criminologist to analyze and present trends back to communities. This hard data and analysis will then be used by the Community Justice Committees for planning and programming purposes. This is of major interest because this type of report has not been done since 1991.

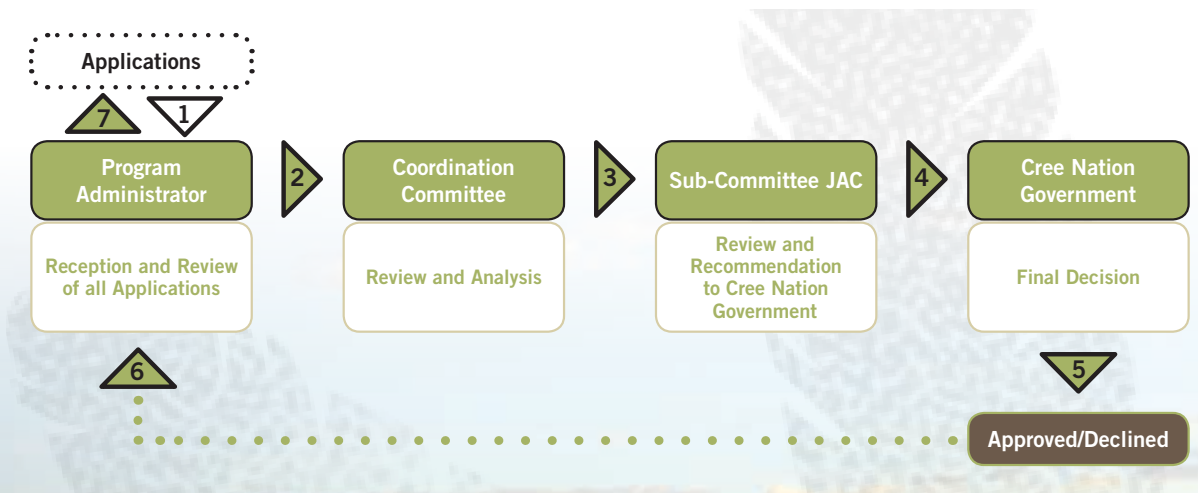
Cree Justice Funds

In 2007, an *Agreement concerning the Administration of Justice for the Crees* was signed with the Government of Quebec. Through this Justice Agreement, Québec provides funding to the Cree Nation Government to facilitate and improve the administration of justice for the Crees and to be used for initiatives related to the justice system, pursuant to Section 18 of the JBNQA. As such, the DOJCS set up in 2014-2015 four funds to help community members implement initiatives aimed at creating safer, engaged communities across Eeyou Istchee. All funds are recurrent except for the Land Based Camps fund.

Each fund has a specific objective:

- The Crime Prevention Fund aims to prevent and combat crime and support the creation of safer communities
- The Youth Engagement Fund aims to empower the Cree youth while promoting general welfare
- The Corrections Fund is established to support rehabilitation and reintegration of Cree offenders,
- The Land Based Camps Fund wants to build land based camps for us to support justice-related activities and rehabilitation of Cree offenders

To assist with the review of applications for the four new justice funds, Judicial Advisory Committee (JAC) Subcommittees – comprising one Québec representa-



Application process for the Fund



The Dymond Girls Mentorship Program helped participants create bonds and learn self-esteem.

tive, one Cree representative and the Director – were created. Overall, we received sixty applications for these new funds, they made all selection recommendations and helped identify successful projects.

In final, 25 projects were accepted and consistent with the policy to reflect Cree values. For example, the Corrections Fund allowed for the creation of a 28-day land based addiction program outside of Waswanipi to allow ex-detainees to benefit from the healing virtues of the land. In Chisasibi, the Youth Fund supported the Dymond Girls Mentorship Program, designed to teach girls self-esteem, self-confidence and leadership. There were Canoe Brigades, Parenting Classes, Youth Summer Camps, and numerous other types of projects that engaged youth and community members.

As a matter of fact, submissions for the Youth Engagement Fund were particularly high as individual, local youth councils and the Cree Nation Youth Council submitted 21 projects all together. The Department sees in this high level of overall participation a true willingness from the Crees of Eeyou Istchee to get involved in prevention, healing and reinsertion.

The JAC Subcommittees will continue to work with us and provide advice, reporting, and recommendations.

Given the Funds required administrators, we were able to identify two of our current staff to promote as fund administrators. This is an example of how we continue to invest in our own staff, and it opened up positions in the communities to welcome new local staff.

In 2016-2017, we will continue to raise awareness about the funds in communities, and will better inform potential applicants about how the funds work, how to apply, and which criteria need to be met. Each year the process will become more fluid, and it will continue to attract and engage more individuals and organizations to work in partnership with the CNG DOJCS.

Developing new programs inside provincial and federal detention facilities

The traditional foods program allows for staff to bring food into the detention facilities for special events. It follows after a traditional teaching that the land can heal, and if we cannot bring them to the land, we will bring the land to them. The program also helps them connect back with their values, teachings and traditions. It reminds us of what is important, and what one could be doing with better choices. Finally, the program can remind our clients that they still belong to a Nation, community, and family.

In 2015-2016, two more Elders were recruited and accredited to go to visit inmates in detention facilities and to accompany them to parole hearings. In Cree culture, Elders are the ones that have council and wisdom, and the knowledge directly related to the land, values, and people. Once they start a relationship with an inmate, Elders can help the healing process in a more holistic way, whether it be mind, body, spirit, or emotion. As well, they become a good anchor point for the reintegration in the community. A Cree counsellor and Cree psychologist also make regular visits to Cree individuals in detention. A corrections liaison officer and corrections release support worker also visit individuals in detention and halfway houses on a regular basis.

As well, to ensure a thorough healing process and future reinsertion in the Eeyou Istchee community, workshops on addiction and violence were offered to inmates. The Cree Nation Department of Justice and Correctional Services has two trained staff members who are certified to deliver In Search of Your Warrior (for men) and the Spirit of Your Warrior (for women). These two programs are designed to help persons caught in the revolving doors of incarceration to address personal core issues, so they can start their healing journey and go on to lead constructive lives. Due to time constraints, portions of this program have been utilized for short-term workshops. In Whapmagoostui, the Relationships component was successfully used, while at the Amos halfway house and detention centre, the Shame and Guilt component was used.

Building a sense of community

More partnerships were also created this year, including Willie's place, a homeless drop-in center in Val-d'Or. While this center is independent from the Department, our staff worked with them and offered a traditional food program to support the clientele's recovery while creating a sense of greater Cree community.

As the Regional office of corrections is located in Val-d'Or, the denunciations had a ripple effect on our employees. Therefore the linkages with Willie's Place and the Val d'Or Friendship Centre helped focus ongoing good work in the Val d'Or area for Cree individuals who were in conflict with the systems.

PREVENTION FOR A BETTER FUTURE

A key mandate of the Department of Justice and Correctional Services is to ensure safe and healthy communities through the prevention of crime and victimization. The DOJCS therefore spends a lot of its time working with youth who are tomorrow's citizens.

Last year, we created a number of new Prevention Program Officer positions for each community. They received specialized training on how to work with kids who may suffer from Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD). The PPOs also support other community-based programs, such as SNAP, working towards healthy communities, choices and lifestyles.

SNAP® (Stop Now and Plan)

STOP NOW AND PLAN (SNAP®) is an evidence-based, cognitive-behavioural program developed by the Child Development Institute in Toronto that helps children regulate angry feelings by getting them to stop, think about the consequences of their behaviour, and plan positive alternatives before they act impulsively.

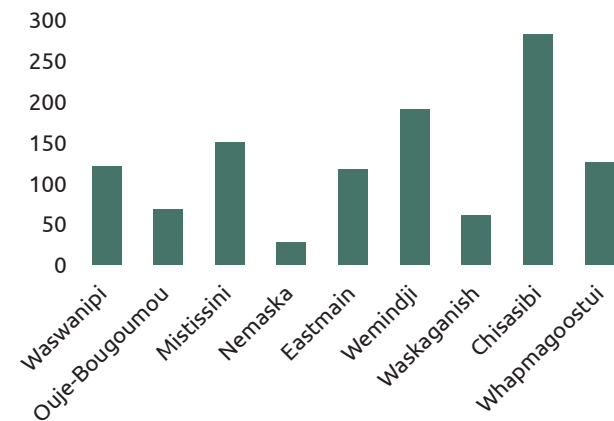
Skills are taught and practiced in a real and meaningful way, and children are enabled to generalize their learning to everyday life. Children learn how to stop and think in order to find solutions that "make their problems smaller, not bigger".

The Pitimaa Maamituneyiht SNAP® Program began as a three-year pilot project, located in the Cree communities of Mistissini and Waswanipi. It is the first SNAP® project to be offered to Cree groups in the world. Pitimaa Maamituneyiht is a term given by the Cree Elders that means to think before you act. Since the pilot project was such a success, and the data reported a statistically significant improvement in children's behavior, the Department of Justice is now pleased to provide the Cree SNAP® for Schools in elementary schools across Eeyou Istchee. In 2015-2016, 1,141 children in grade 1 to 6 from 73 classes benefited from the program, and 39 students received individual following up sessions.

Our hope is to lessen the amount of suspensions and expulsions by training children to deal with conflict in a healthy manner, rather than acting on impulse. When children cannot cope with their anger and anxiety effectively, it inhibits their ability to learn new skills and absorb knowledge – thus, SNAP® can also help children to learn more effectively in the classroom.

The initiative is so successful that as a matter of fact, its Facebook page has more than 700 followers.

SNAP - Number of Students who benefited from the program





An Alternative to School Suspensions

Developed over the past year, the Alternative Suspension Program – based on one that was developed by the YMCA in Montreal and currently has 80 sites across the country – was successfully adapted in light of the realities in Aboriginal communities. To address the high number of suspensions in our Cree schools in Eeyou Istchee, it aims to work with children while on suspension, instead of simply sending them home.

The Coordinator of this program and the three youth workers were hired and trained in the fall to work with children who enter the Alternative to School Suspensions. As well, Program Prevention Assistants were hired to help Program prevention officers with the delivery of this initiative. There was substantial work invested into setting up the three locations and establishing partnerships locally.

Furthermore, a new Agreement was signed with Youth Fusion Quebec, a charity dedicated to lowering school dropout rates by creating continuous ties between the school system and the community. Youth Fusion’s vision is aligned with our own that education is key and that at-risk students need to be involved in innovative and meaningful educational projects that foster learning, skills, and social integration.

Since November 2015, when the program was launched in Chisasibi, Mistissini and Waskaganish, more than 69 youth have benefited from this new initiative. The majority of youth in the program were between the ages of 12 to 15 years old. The largest reasons for a referral were absenteeism, apathy, and disruptive behaviour. Following the program, there was an increase in engagement at school and a majority of these participants did not get suspended again.

During the suspension period, the youth were directed to the program facility outside of the school. School-work was completed in the morning to ensure that the students kept up with their class, and in the afternoon, the programming focused on the development of life skills and awareness on key issues. At the end of each program time, a meeting is scheduled with the parents and school to evaluate results and discuss the child’s reintegration at school. We have had confirmation from schools that the program is improving results in the short-term.

Following the introduction of the program in Cree schools, the Department of Justice Director, Donald

Nicholls, was invited in the Spring 2016 to speak on partnerships with Aboriginal peoples during the YMCA of Quebec’s Annual General Assembly. His presentation touched on building further partnerships with the YMCA of Quebec, based upon a mutual objective to improve the lives of the children in our respective communities.

In the works: Mindfulness Martial Arts Program

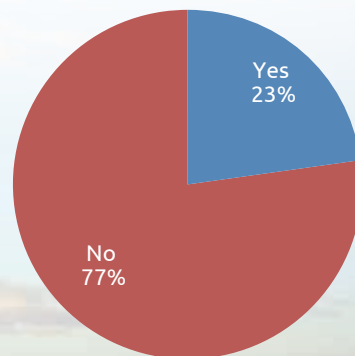
This year, the DOJCS has established a new partnership with CDI to offer, in the months to come, a new complementary program for children called Mindfulness Martial Arts Program. This program was developed by the Child Development Institute (CDI), an accredited children’s mental health agency in Toronto, along with the Integra Foundation. The program is targeted for children with learning challenges, ADHD, and behavioural issues such as self-control, with whom other approaches may not be successful. It integrates mindfulness meditation, breathing exercises, discipline, and behaviour modification into a 20-week martial arts group training program. The desired outcome is to improve youth’s self-awareness and ability to face challenges, so that they can learn and apply new, more adaptive coping strategies.

The children participating in this program will work on regulating their emotions, improving their execution capacities, and strengthening their ability to focus. The Department is having discussions with schools to select the ones that will offer the initial Mindfulness Martial Arts program. Adults in the communities with previous martial arts training will be recruited to run the 20-week program. We are confident that the Mindfulness Martial Arts program can effectively complement the work done with SNAP and the Alternative Suspension Program.

Camps and We Day

Last year, the Department collaborated with external partners to provide Cree children’s camps. The camps work with children to develop values, character, life and social skills, as well as to address issues such as bullying, resilience, resistance to peer pressure, and positive role modeling. It is an investment in our children of our time, attention, and support. Each year, they make new friend-

Short term results (Resuspended)



ships, challenge themselves to accomplish new goals, and learn many new values.

Last July, the Youth Engagement Fund sponsored a group of 10 Cree youth to attend the Take Action Camp, run by Me to We and Free the Children in Ontario. Not only did our campers make long lasting friendships and a solid network of youth who believe that they can change the world one step at the time, but they also learned how to make a difference and become global citizens. Lasting a week, Take Action Camp aims at helping youth develop their leadership skills and work on their personal and social development. As the feedback by youth and parents was so positive, the Department will expand this program this summer to send youth from all nine communities.

We Day

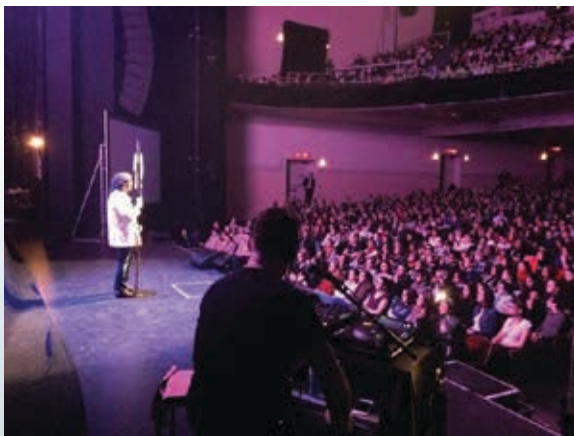
In February 2016, a group of 7 youths from a Cree Board of Health group home participated in the We Day in Montreal. The event is a celebration of youth making a difference in their local and global communities. Two of our children were invited on stage to pray on the dream stick by one of the event speakers, Dr. Stanley Vollant, the first Aboriginal surgeon in Quebec, and founder of the Innu Meshkenu walk. They will keep a long-lasting memory of this event.

Events and Key gatherings

Being visible in the communities, and being part of significant events, matters and creates stronger relationships.

Last year, the DOJC was a sponsor for the Cree Nation Bear's "Cheech" hockey event as a tribute to one of their players who perished in a fire with four other young men in Mistissini. It was a way for the community to gather and heal following this tragedy. The Department also established a special grieving workshop.

The Department participates actively in key gatherings, where individuals from inside and outside of the Cree Nation are brought together to discuss and reflect on issues, such as family violence and youth engagement.




Dr. Stanley Vollant with the dream stick during We Day 2016

You, Him, Her & Me

Children's Mental Health Affects Everyone

October 21-22nd, 2015 • John D. Bradley Centre



M.C.B.N. Children's Association
is pleased to present
2015 Children's Mental Health Affects Everyone Summit

The Summit was developed in partnership with Chatham-Kent Children Services, Child Development Institute of Toronto and Ontario Job Creation Program. It aims to bring together service providers, policy makers, mental health professionals, educators, clinicians, and researchers, with youth and family care givers to share experiences and ideas on how best to **SHIFT KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE.**

Our Hands Together ... Making a Difference

Speakers and Topics

Dr. GREG ADLER
Anxiety and Therapy
Dr. LERNA AUGERBERG
Disruptive Behaviour and Self-Control
Dr. JEAN CLONTON
The Developing Brain and Children's Mental Health
ANNE-MARIE HEBURGAN
SCHEMATA JUDGE, ONTARIO COURT OF JUSTICE
From Justice to Education
PIERRE MASON
From Policing to Restorative Justice
Dr. KAREN MINDEN, C.M.
Addiction
MIKE NEUTS
Myles and Mental Health: A Parent's Perspective
DONALD NICHOLLS
Aboriginal Children's Mental Health
Ms. LEAH PARSONS & Ms. CAROL TODD
The Story of Our Daughter's Betwixt & Amanda
Cyber Bullying and Suicide
Dr. DEBRA PERLES
Bullying & Healthy Relationships
Dr. MARSHALL PHILLIPS
Learning Disabilities and Mental Health (LDMH)
PAULA REASME-ZAMBER
Access Canada in Chatham-Kent
YOUTH PANEL

John D. Bradley Centre
565 Richmond St, Chatham, Ontario

\$195 per person 2 Day Inclusive:
Conference & Key Note dinner


\$150 per person: 2 Day Conference

\$50 per person: Key Note Dinner
with Chair person of MCBN - Mike Neuts

For more information please contact
Marg Beintema: 519-358-1451 x 2240
marg@makechildrenbetternow.org
Kassya Kesany: 519-358-1451 x 2247
kassya@makechildrenbetternow.org

To register: Cash, Cheque or Money Order
Payable to: Make Children Better Now
12854 Longwoods Road,
Thamesville ON N0P 2K0

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



The Department strongly believes in these events as a way to mobilize a unified effort to create the conditions for a safe and prosperous Cree Nation.

In October 2015, the Department's Director, Donald Nicholls, was invited by the Make Children Better Now Association, to speak at the 2015 Children's Mental Health Conference. It was an occasion for him to discuss about the programs put forward for Cree children. Later that year, Mike Neuts, who founded this association after losing his son Myles to bullying, came to give a conference on this very important topic.

As well, in March, Director Nicholls spoke at an event organized at the Canadian Parliament for the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. He talked about the over-representation of Aboriginal peoples in the criminal justice and corrections system in Canada and the measures that need to be reviewed to reduce these numbers in the future.

Working Collaboratively

It is a known fact that early prevention reduces harm. Actively identifying issues, potential threats, and cases that may escalate is an important part of the Department work. The Department will be working on creating community hubs to work with other community stakeholders.

The DOJCS organised a crime prevention week in the communities. It was the occasion to strengthen relationships between the organisations and meet community members. It is also an occasion where the Eeyou Eenu

Police Force (EPPF) participates alongside the Department to raise awareness in the communities. For example, Marc Mero, a wrestler who fought addiction, was invited during the crime prevention day in Mistissini.

As well, the Cree School Board requested to work collaboratively with the DOJCS. One of the first mandates was to perform a threat assessment and look at the safety of buildings, such as schools. Though no one wishes for an emergency, it is important to prepare emergency readiness plans. The EPPF was working on emergency response as well for all the schools. The same exercise would be done for CNG's own buildings, including emergency planning and site threat assessment.

ACCESS Open Minds

The Department of Justice and Correctional Services alongside the Cree Health Board will start work with the Douglas Mental Health University Institute to launch ACCESS Open Minds. This project is the first pan-Canadian research network funded by CIHR's Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR).

ACCESS stands for Adolescent/young adult Connections to Community Driven, Early, Strength-based and Stigma-free services. It seeks to transform services for youth between 11 to 25 years of age who are experiencing mental health difficulties. It is a large-scale pilot test of the youth mental health system redesign initiative.

The pilot initiative will take place in Mistissini and both the DOJCS and the CHB will assist the Douglas Institute to ensure success.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Strategic Planning globally and locally

In order to create engagement around our goal of developing a Cree justice system, with Cree judges, in Cree courts, we launched an extensive strategic planning exercise, both at the DOJCS and the local Justice community level. In November 2015, we shared accomplishments, celebrated best practices, and looked at the overall department's strategic plan. Two more sessions followed to allow local justice committees to look at the Department's global plan and work at making it relevant locally and respectful of each community's specificity and values. The outcome of the exercise is the 2016-2017 plan to offer the most adapted services to the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and to communicate more effectively with the public to ensure Community outreach, buy-in, and use of our resources.

Though the strategic work is ongoing, the exercise confirmed our orientations. The continued integration of Cree language and culture in our programs and the role of the Community Justice Committees remain success factors. Through these, we engage offenders, reduce recidivism and give communities a voice. We will continue to build skills locally, as Cree justice needs to be community driven. We want to express gratitude to all of those,

volunteers and employees, working at making justice relevant and engaging on our territory.

Quebec Social Justice Forum: better delivery of justice to Aboriginals

Also this year, the Department of Justice and Correctional Services was invited to participate in the Quebec Social Justice Forum. This working group consists of the Minister of Justice, the Public Security, the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, the Barreau of Québec, the AFNQL, judges of the Court of Québec, the Cree Nation Government, and the Quebec Native Women's Association. It has the mandate to look at how justice can be better delivered to Aboriginal People of Quebec.

When the question was raised about programs, services, and priorities to be included in a social justice plan, the DOJCS stressed the importance of communities and the need for more services at the local level in order to develop collective ownership of solutions and true engagement. As well, we shared the importance of focusing on youth as a means of prevention and healing. We believe that by providing our children with better support and adapted services at an earlier age, we can support and guide them in making better and healthier long-term life choices. The plan is not complete yet and we will continue to actively participate to ensure that it meets the objectives and is respectful of our way of life and values.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, in its almost eight years of existence, the Cree Nation Government Department of Justice and Correctional Services (DJOCS) has been working to create services, programs, and processes that tie in directly with Cree values and ways of life. 2015-2016 has been a successful year with the growth of staff, facilities, services, and programs.

Various actions are taken to strengthen the foundations of a Cree justice system. This year, we launched an extensive strategic planning exercise that directs us towards our goal, both at the department and community levels. Again, we raised the skills of Department staff to render justice in the best possible way, we also trained and continued to engage the Community Justice Committees to allow them to manage and mediate conflict locally, as courts of law are not the only solution. We developed funds to support projects and create partnerships, we invested in our youth through prevention, harm reduction programs and camps since, with enough skills, every individual becomes part of the same solution.

In the year to come, we are committed to continue ensuring that justice is rendered in harmony with Cree values and culture, with conflicts solved within the community and alternatives developed locally. With public safety and healthier communities, families, and environments being a priority. In this type of setting, justice can be more human, holistic, and inclusive.

A Tribute to GERTI MURDOCH



On behalf of the Cree-Quebec Judicial Advisory Committee, and of the Cree Nation Government Department of Justice and Correctional Services, we wish to pay tribute to a great Cree leader, Gerti Murdoch.

Gerti was a dedicated woman that had the Cree language and the educational system at heart. In the early 1970's, she was a strong influence in the "Cree Way Project" with the help of her sister Annie Whiskeychan. Their aim was to promote Cree language within the school system and to engage with the community to ensure the language of our ancestors flourished in modern times.

Her devotion goes back a long time ago, when she started employment with the Cree School Board in 1979. Early on, she held many influential positions for students of the Waskaganish School, especially in her role as the Community Education Administrator. As she said it herself, one of her main goals was to "put the students first". In 2014, after 35 years at the Cree School Board, she retired, yet continued to volunteer her time for the community and the future generations.

Gerti was one of the first Cree Justice of the Peace in Eeyou Istchee, a skilled negotiator, an



administrator at the Cree Nation level, a leader among her colleagues, and a team builder. She contributed to many Funding and Collective Agreements as well as to many of the By-Laws and policies that ensure quality services to the students of the Cree School Board.

Once retired, Gerti worked for her community in social development at the Cree Nation Government level, participating in the Judicial

Advisory Committee that guided the Cree justice Committees, and the Eeyou Eeyou Police Commission. She was also part of the team of translators working towards the *Glossary of legal terms in Eeyou Eeyou language*. Once it is completed, this tool will create equality and fairness for our people within the Criminal Justice System, by ensuring that language barriers can no longer be an issue in the rendering of justice.

Gerti was not one to shy away from a challenge. She made quite an impact on the community of Waskaganish, within the Cree School Board, the Justice Department, and on various community boards. In honour of who she was as an individual, and of the great many things that she has given to her people, she will be remembered for being a trailblazer, and for ensuring her community's development and prosperity.